UPDATE

Mayors pull meeting from Springs

Amendment 2 causes cancellation

■ Lawmaker slaps back at boycotting cities/B7

By **Rich Laden** and **Louis Aguilar**/Gazette Telegraph

In an unprecedented move, the U.S. Conference of Mayors decided to boycott Colorado Springs and shift its annual convention to another city in June to protest Amendment 2.

Citing its past support of gay rights and a fear that several big-city mayors wouldn't attend the convention, the executive committee of the mayors group voted Thursday overwhelmingly against meeting anywhere in Colorado as long as Amendment 2 remains part of the state's constitution.

The decision heightens the controversy over Amendment 2, which prohibits laws protecting gays from discrimination based on sexual orientation. State voters approved it Nov. 3 by a 53 percent to 47 percent margin.

Opponents say the decision creates more momentum for a national boycott of Colorado and a repeal of Amendment 2. Supporters complained the mayors were hypocrites for passing judgment on Colorado while many cities and states have no laws to protect gays.

The mayors group is the most influential among the handful of organizations that have canceled meetings in Colorado. The loss to Colorado Springs will be one of prestige, not just money. The group is composed of mayors from cities with populations of 30,000 or more.

Such conventions seldom result in sweeping urban policy changes, but they do attract many big-city mayors and put the host city in a media spotlight.

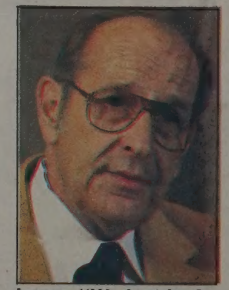
The convention, scheduled for June 18-23, would have brought more than $1 million worth of media cov-

See **MAYORS**/A3

REACTION

"This was a moral question. This organization and the mayors that are members of it must be very much aware of that fact that all people in our nation. . . .should be treated like citizens."

— U.S. Conference of Mayors Exec. Director J. Thomas Cochran



Isaac: "We lost it. So be it," Colorado Springs mayor says.

"I told them (other mayors) 'you ought to be leaders.' I would guarantee you that in the great majority of jurisdictions, if you were to put (Amendment 2) to a vote, I personally believe they'd vote like Colorado. Not that they want anybody discriminated against, but they wouldn't want a special protected class based on sexual orientation."

— Colorado Springs Mayor Robert Isaac

▶ **SCIENTISTS SEEK AIDS VACCINE:** Researchers say they could be making progress in the search for an AIDS vaccine. A weakened virus could be the most powerful and protective AIDS-type vaccine yet tested in monkeys. However, some scientists say it could take years to determine whether the vaccine is safe for humans./**A6**

WORLD

▶ **NATO MAY USE FORCE IN BOSNIA:** NATO threatened Thursday to use force to keep the skies over Bosnia-Herzegovina free of Serbian warplanes. The U.N. Security Council was expected to approve an enforcement resolution that would challenge Bosnian Serbs to ground their planes or risk being shot down./**A14**

CITY/REGION

▶ **ARMY DEPOT TO CUT JOBS:** About 230 civilians who work at the Army depot in Pueblo may find themselves without a job at the end of June. The entire work force — about 500 employees — was told Thursday that pink slips will be issued in February and those affected will have about four months to find a new job./**B1**

▶ **BFI TO EXPAND FOUNTAIN LANDFILL:** Browning Ferris Industries was given approval Thursday by El Paso County commissioners to expand the Fountain Landfill dump site. The Fountain dump will now be 320 acres instead of 61 and this guaran-

Yeltsin takes in sights

Russian President Boris Yeltsin waves to tourists Thursday as he tours the Great Wall of China after a meeting with Chinese President Yang Shangkun. Yeltsin's visit could forge new links between the countries. WORLD/**A12**

BUSINESS

▶ **COMPTRONIX SEES DIP IN STOCK:** Comp-

the rights to all the ex-**Beatle's** return concert last week at the Ed Sullivan Theater, which was taped for an MTV "Up Close" program, he said. In 1964, the Beatles made their first big impact in the United States with an appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show from that theater.

'What, me buy?'

The Park Avenue auction, where the elite vie for classics by **Picasso** and **Van Gogh**, is going low-brow. **Alfred E. Neuman**, the gap-toothed poster boy of passivity, goes on the block this week. The "What, me worry?" kid — along with archival material from 40 years of Mad magazine — is up for bids today at Christie's, which usually deals in upper-crust collectibles. The big ticket items — Alfred E. in assorted incarnations: with **Paul Newman** and **Robert Redford** in a "Butch Cassidy" parody, with **Mia Farrow** in a "Rosemary's Baby" shot, as **Batman**, with **Madonna**, and as "Bad"-era **Michael Jackson**. They are expected to sell for at least $2,500.

Costner as Earp

Kevin Costner will star as **Wyatt Earp** in a film biography of the legendary Western lawman, a pro-

Samurai shout

Kosuke Ushijima, a 25-year-old prep school teacher, gives a big shout at Thursday's annual Year-End Shouting Contest in Tokyo. Ushijima, wearing a samurai armor and helmet over a rubber wet suit, won a $250 prize, not for how loud he shouted but for his costume. Twenty-seven contestants participated in the contest.

NBC for CBS, the New York Times reported. NBC had planned to replace Letterman with Carvey if Letterman departs, and had signed the actor-comedian-impersonator to what network executives called an "exclusive long-term deal," the Times said. The report was widely denied.

Help for the holidays

Bruce Springsteen has made his

credit card

The next time a poorly programmed computer mixes up your electric bill or rejects your credit card application, consider this:

Jim Clayton of Knoxville, Tenn., is ranked 399th on Forbes' list of richest people with a personal net worth of $265 million, but a computer threw out his application for a VISA card from the American Association of Retired Persons.

The mobile home magnate found it amusing. The AARP said Wednesday it was a mistake and that Clayton's card was in the mail — thanks to human intervention.

AARP spokesman Ted Bobrow said the computer turned down Clayton because it found there had been frequent requests for his credit report.

Clayton said firms seeking business with his company, Clayton

Mayors/ Action is personal setback for Isaac

From A1

erage to the Pikes Peak region and $600,000 worth of business from up to 1,500 mayors and their staffers, say local tourism officials. Organizers planned to spend $350,000 to stage the convention and showcase the region. The event was to have been held mainly at The Broadmoor hotel.

The move to an as-yet-undetermined city was a personal setback for Colorado Springs Mayor Robert Isaac.

A past president of the group, Isaac lobbied for years to bring the convention to his hometown. Three years ago, the group passed over bigger cities and chose Colorado Springs to host the 1993 convention.

"People are the ones who set these rules," Isaac said in an telephone interview about Amendment 2, which he personally supports. "All I did was try to maintain the conference because I thought it was important for our community. And we lost it. So be it."

During a meeting in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, Isaac argued that few of the cities represented by executive committee members had laws protecting gays. Nationwide, only six states have such laws, he said. Amendment 2, Isaac said, does not discriminate.

"Those facts don't mean anything on an issue like this," Isaac said. "It's political, and they're worried about (offending) their own constituencies. And I think they're reading them wrong, to tell you the truth."

Executive committee members described the meeting as emotional. Isaac's colleagues professed respect for him but still said they could not bring the convention to his city.

"This issue is larger than him," said Newton, Mass., Mayor Theodore Mann, an executive committee member.

The mayors pointed to a resolution they adopted in 1984 that urged "all levels of government (to) adopt legal protections for the rights of gay and lesbian Americans."

In addition, mayors of diverse metropolitan areas said they would boycott the convention if it were held in Colorado Springs.

This marks the first time in the group's 60-year history that a convention has been moved because of a political disagreement. Meetings have been moved twice before because of logistical problems.

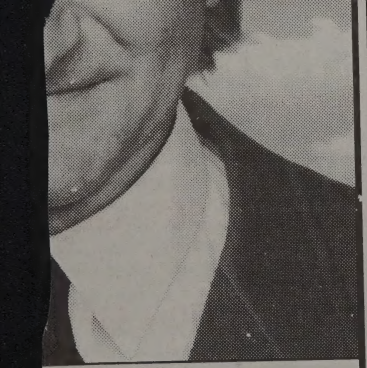
A handful of other groups already had scrubbed meetings in Denver and Colorado Springs, and seven cities — including Los Angeles and New York City — have barred official travel to the state or most parts of it. On Thursday, the Austin, Texas, City Council became the latest to ban travel to Colorado. And groups as diverse as Hollywood celebrities to the Sisters of Loretto, a Catholic order of nuns, have spoken out against Amendment 2.

"It's definitely proof there is a national consensus that Amendment 2 is wrong," said Robert Bray, spokesman for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in Washington, D.C., of the mayors' decision. "I know the other side has tried to say that it was merely special-interest groups supporting the boycott, but this is a group of officials from across the country."

Colorado Springs City Councilman David White urged the city to boycott the mayors group. He's asking that the city yank its $6,500-a-year membership in the group.

"This is basically saying we no longer want to associate with this type of an organization that has double standards," White said.

Gov. Roy Romer declined to comment on the cancellation, and Denver Mayor Wellington Webb — who has traveled around the country to thwart the Colorado boycott — couldn't be reached.



Production A Barry Levinson Film Robin Williams Toys
t LL Cool J. Music by Hans Zimmer and Trevor Horn
Albert Wolsky Production Designer Ferdinando Scarfiotti
ry Levinson Produced by Mark Johnson and Barry Levinson
by Barry Levinson
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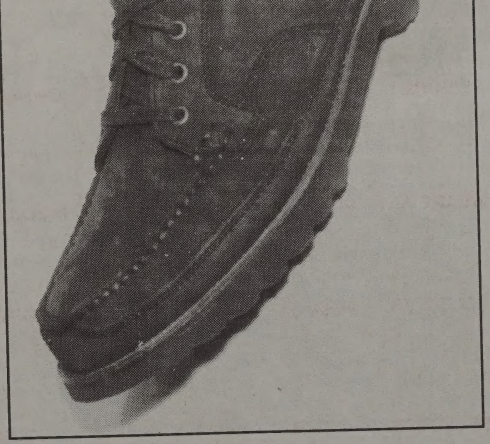

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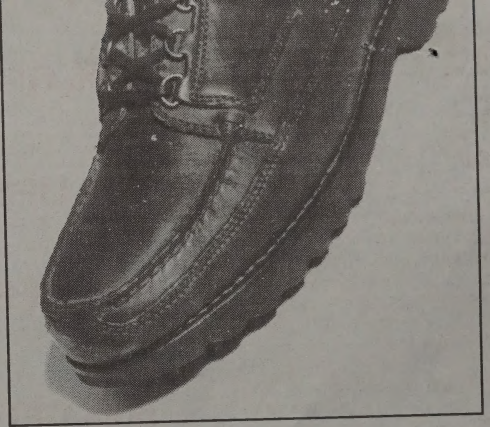

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